

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims replaces all prior versions and listings of claims in this case.

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (Previously presented) An array storage system comprising:
  - a shelf defining a tubular closed passage with a frontend opening and a backend opening;
  - a frontend partition in the frontend opening;
  - a backend partition that is removable from the shelf and is adapted for operably supporting a component inserted in the backend;
  - a backplane supported by a backplane support that is removable from the shelf, the backplane operably engageable in electrical connection with the component on one side of the backplane; and
  - a multiple device array comprising a carrier enclosing a plurality of data storage devices that are electrically connected to a common connector, whereas the carrier is operably slidably engageable in the frontend partition toward the backplane to connect the common connector to the other side of the backplane, the multiple device array further comprising an alignment member extending outwardly from a leading end thereof to matingly engage the backplane at a first sliding disposition of the carrier in the frontend partition, thereby operably aligning the common connector with the backplane before contacting engagement occurs between the common connector and the backplane at a second sliding disposition of the carrier nearer the backplane.
2. (Original) The array storage system of claim 1 wherein the removable backend partition comprises the backplane support.
3. (Canceled)

4. (Previously presented) The array storage system of claim 1 wherein the frontend partition is adapted for supporting a second component different than the multiple device array.

5. (Previously presented) The array storage system of claim 4 wherein the second component comprises a component selected from a group consisting of a data storage device controller, a power supply unit, an interface unit, and a battery unit.

6. (Previously presented) The array storage system of claim 1 wherein the component comprises a component selected from a group consisting of a data storage device controller, a power supply unit, an interface unit, and a battery unit.

7. (Previously presented) The array storage system of claim 6 wherein the backend partition is adapted for supporting a third component different than the component.

8. (Previously presented) The array storage system of claim 7 wherein the third component comprises a component selected from a group consisting of a data storage device controller, a power supply unit, an interface unit, and a battery unit.

9. (Previously presented) A shelf comprising:

an enclosure defining a tubular closed passage with a frontend opening and a  
backend opening;

a frontend partition adapted for supporting a first component inserted in the frontend;

a removable backend partition adapted for supporting a second component inserted in the backend; and

a backplane support fixed to the backend partition and adapted for operably fixing a backplane to the backplane support to support the backplane while removably connecting the first and second components to opposing sides, respectively, of the backplane.

10. (Canceled)

11. (Original) The shelf of claim 9 wherein the first component comprises a multiple disc array.

12. (Original) The shelf of claim 11 wherein the frontend partition is adapted for supporting a third component different than the multiple disc array.

13. (Original) The shelf of claim 12 wherein the third component comprises a component selected from a group consisting of a data storage device controller, a power supply unit, an interface unit, and a battery unit.

14. (Original) The shelf of claim 9 wherein the second component comprises a component selected from a group consisting of a data storage device controller, a power supply unit, an interface unit, and a battery unit.

15. (Original) The shelf of claim 14 wherein the backend partition is adapted for supporting a fourth component different than the second component.

16. (Original) The array storage system of claim 15 wherein the fourth component comprises a component selected from a group consisting of a data storage device controller, a power supply unit, an interface unit, and a battery unit.

17. (Previously presented) A method for electrically connecting components comprising:

- providing a shelf defining a tubular closed passage with a frontend opening and a backend opening;
- attaching a backplane to a leading end of a backend partition;
- inserting the backend partition in the backend opening;
- inserting a first component having an alignment member on a leading end thereof to a first insertion depth in the frontend opening to matingly engage the alignment member with the backplane before electrically engaging the first component with the backplane;

inserting the first component to a second insertion depth greater than the first  
insertion depth to electrically engage the first component with the backplane;  
and  
inserting a second component in the backend partition to electrically engage the  
backplane.

18. (Currently amended) The method of claim 17 further comprising:  
removing the backend partition from the backend opening;  
removing the backplane;  
attaching a replacement backplane to the backend partition;  
replacing the backend partition in the backend opening; ~~and~~

19. (Canceled)

20. (Previously presented) The method of claim 18 wherein the attaching a  
replacement backplane step comprises attaching a characteristically different backplane.